

CLAIMS

1. A method of securing a line to a patient or of adjusting the position of a line thus secured, comprising elongating and narrowing a sleeve applied to the line to grip the line and resist movement of the line along its longitudinal axis with respect to the sleeve.
- 5 2. A method according to claim 1 wherein, after gripping the line, the sleeve elongates in response to said movement of the line and resists continuance of said movement of the line.
3. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the sleeve is elongated by moving its ends away from one another.
- 10 4. A method according to claim 3, wherein the ends of the sleeve are biased away from one another.
5. A method according to any preceding claim, comprising shortening and widening the sleeve to release the line and permit said movement of the line.
6. A method according to claim 5, wherein the sleeve is shortened by moving its ends
15 towards one another.
7. A method according to claim 6 when appendant to claim 4, wherein the ends are pushed together against said biasing.
8. A method according to any preceding claim, comprising holding the sleeve in an elongated configuration gripping the line.
- 20 9. A method according to any preceding claim, comprising passing the line out of the sleeve through a wall of the sleeve.

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10. A method according to claim 9, comprising passing the line back into the sleeve through the wall of the sleeve.

11. A method according to any preceding claim, comprising securing the line, checking the position of the line with respect to the patient by x-ray or other means, adjusting the
5 line into a desired position, and fixing it in the desired position.

12. A method according to claim 11, wherein fixing is achieved by adhesively connecting the line and the sleeve.

13. A fastener for securing a line to a patient, comprising a sleeve of variable length capable when lengthened of gripping the line.

10 14. A fastener according to claim 13, wherein the sleeve when shortened is capable of sliding along the line.

15. A fastener according to claim 13 or claim 14, further comprising attachment means for attaching the sleeve to a patient.

15 16. A fastener according to claim 15, wherein the attachment means comprises one or more loops.

17. A fastener according to claim 16, wherein the or each loop is formed by doubling over the sleeve.

18. A fastener according to any of claims 15 to 17, wherein the attachment means comprises a harness, sling or other means adapted to embrace a part of the patient.

20 19. A fastener according to any of claims 15 to 17, wherein the attachment means comprises a pad or flange adapted to lie against part of the patient's body.

20. A fastener according to claim 19, wherein the pad or flange is adapted to be adhered

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or sutured to the patient's body.

21. A fastener according to any of claims 13 to 20, further comprising a support and movable means for varying the length of the sleeve with respect to the support.
22. A fastener according to claim 21 and further comprising holding means for holding
5 the movable means in a position in which the sleeve grips the line.
23. A fastener according to claim 21 or claim 22, wherein the movable means includes bias means acting to elongate the sleeve.
24. A fastener according to any of claims 21 to 23, wherein the movable means includes at least one lever acting upon the sleeve.
- 10 25. A fastener according to claim 24 when appendant to claim 23, wherein the lever is a finger tab movable against the bias means to shorten the sleeve.
26. A fastener according to claim 25, wherein the finger tab is opposed by a corresponding formation on the support.
27. A fastener according to any of claims 21 to 26, wherein the movable means is integral
15 with or attached to a support in the form of a pad adapted to lie against the patient.
28. A fastener according to any of claims 21 to 27 wherein the movement of the movable means is guided by guide means.
29. A fastener according to claim 28, wherein a carriage supports one end of the sleeve and is movable on a track or frame that supports the other end of the sleeve.
- 20 30. A fastener according to claim 29, wherein the carriage is lockable with the sleeve in a desired elongation by holding means such as a lock nut, a detent, a latch, a ratchet or a clamp acting between the carriage and the track or frame.

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31. A fastener according to any of claims 13 to 30, wherein the sleeve has a perforated or foraminous wall defining a plurality of openings.

32. A fastener according to claim 31, wherein an opening is capable of permitting the line to pass through the wall of the sleeve.

5 33. A fastener according to claim 31 or claim 32, wherein the sleeve wall is a mesh, grid, net or web.

34. A fastener according to any of claims 31 to 33, wherein the sleeve is of filamentary construction.

10 35. A fastener according to any of claims 31 to 34, wherein the sleeve is a spirally woven tube.

36. A fastener comprising a sleeve of variable length capable when lengthened of gripping a line for the purpose of securing the line to a patient.

37. Use of a fastener as defined in any of claims 13 to 36 for securing a line to a patient.

15 38. In combination, a line to be secured to a patient and a fastener as defined in any of claims 13 to 36.

39. In combination, a fastener as defined in any of claims 13 to 35 and instructions for its use in securing a line to a patient.

40. Use in securing a line to a patient of variable-length sleeve material capable when lengthened of gripping the line.

20 41. Use of variable-length sleeve material capable when lengthened of gripping a line, in the manufacture of a fastener for securing a line to a patient.

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42. Variable-length sleeve material for use in securing a line to a patient by lengthening the sleeve and gripping the line.

43. Medical or surgical apparatus operating according to the method of any of claims 1 to 12 or including the fastener of any of claims 13 to 35.

5 44. A method of securing a line to a patient or of adjusting the position of a line thus secured, substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to or as illustrated in any of Figures 3 to 17 of the accompanying drawings.

45. A fastener for securing a line to a patient or medical or surgical apparatus including said fastener, substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to or as illustrated in
10 any of Figures 3 to 17 of the accompanying drawings.

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